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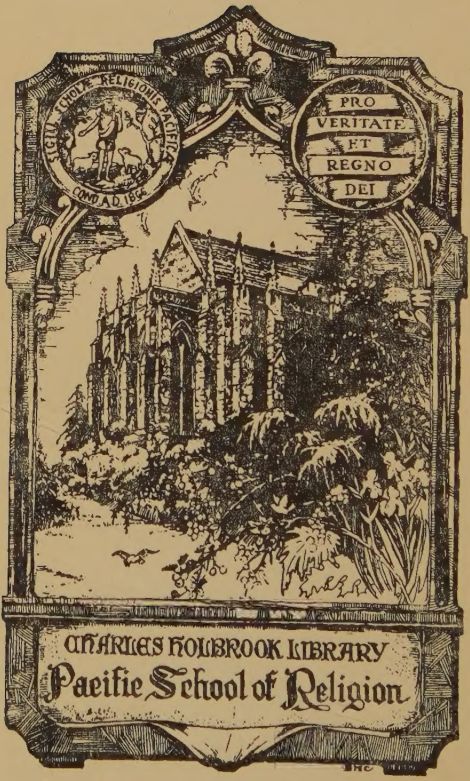
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Pacific School of Religion

Congregational Churches in New York.
Black-river association

ARTICLES

OF

FAITH *and* PRACTICE,

ADOPTED

BY THE ASSOCIATED CHURCHES

IN THE

COUNTIES OF

LEWIS AND JEFFERSON,

(N. Y.)

WATERTOWN:

Printed by Henry Cowen.

1810.

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WHEREAS christian societies or churches, which agree in the essential articles of Faith *and* Practice, *may receive great advantages from assisting, advising and watching over each other, receiving each others members to occasional communion, and from every act of fellowship as far as local circumstances will permit.*

We the delegates of churches, in the counties of Lewis and Jefferson, in the state of N. York, met at Champion, Sept. 22, 1801 *; do propose to the churches which we represent, to form a nearer union, and walk together in visible fellowship ; and as the foundation of such fellowship, we propose to the said churches to adopt the following articles of Faith and Practice, and that each church adopting them, shall, with her several members, be entitled to the fellowship of her sister churches, until regularly exclued for herisy or disorderly walk.*

ARTICLES, &c.

Art. 1. This union shall be called the Black-River Association, or the associated churches in the counties of Lewis and Jefferson.

Art. 2. We will meet by delegation, on the first Tuesday of Sept. annually, at 11 o'clock A. M. at such a place as shall have been agreed upon at a previous meeting; we will attend a public lecture at 3 o'clock P. M. and do such other business as may be thought necessary for the union, peace, order of the churches, and the interest of the Redeemer's kingdom.

Art. 3. The Pastor of each church, ex-officio, shall be a member of said meeting. Ordinary ministers, not the pastors of particular churches, who, at any time may be employed to preach within the limits of this association, shall when present at any of our meetings, be considered as members. Each church, also, whether it hath a pastor or not, shall chose and delegate one of her members, who shall be a member of said meeting, and each member when present shall be entitled to an equal vote.

Art. 4. We will chose a moderator, scribe and register, who shall continue in office until providentially removed, or others chosen in their room, which we judge will be expedient as often as we shall meet.

Art. 5. A special meeting may be called by the application of three ministers, or three churches, to the moderator.

Art. 6. If one church is dissatisfied with another, she shall treat with her sister church according to scripture rule, Matt. 18, taking one or two sister churches by delegation, and if satisfaction cannot be obtained, the matter shall be brought in a written complaint before this association, who shall hear and decide the controversy.

Art. 7. If there be any difficulty between a pastor and his church, the matter shall be referred to an ecclesiastical council, consisting of an equal number of ministers and delegates from churches. The ministers and churches to whom application shall be made, shall be agreed upon by the parties, but if one of the parties shall refuse to join in calling a council, said council may be called by the other.

Art. 8. When any council may be called for the purpose of ordaining a minister, and settling difficulties in any of the churches, or for any purpose whatever, a major part

said council when convened, shall be of
is association.

Art. 9. As the settlement of ministers is
importance, not only to the societies where
ey are, but to the cause of truth in gener-
; we judge it expedient before we proceed
introduce a man into the work of the
inistry, to obtain from him further evi-
nce of his qualifications, than can be had
a few hours examination at the time of
e proposed ordination ; it is therefore pro-
osed that those churches which wish to
prove in such important business, should
quire the candidate to be examined by this
sociation, or its committee immediately af-
r, or if convenient, before his beginning
preach with them.

Art. 10. Those churches only, shall be
mitted into this union, which shall agree
the following articles of faith and practice.

Concerning the Scriptures.

Art. 1. The writers of the Old and New
estament, were directed by an infalible
irit of inspiration, so that not only some
rt, but all the scriptures were given by
spiration of God.

Art. 2. The scriptures of the old and new
estaments, are the only writings to be re-
ived as a revelation from God, and the on-
rule to direct us how we may glorify and

enjoy him. They teach us all things neceſſary to be known and believed concerning God, and our duty to him, and we neither need, nor are to expect further revelation for that purpoſe; creeds and confeſſions are no farther to be received than they are contained in the ſcriptures.

Concerning God and the Trinity.

Art. 1. God is a ſpirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being, wiſdom, power, holineſs, juſtice, goodneſs and truth.

Art. 2. There is but one only the living and the true God.

Art. 3. There are three perſons in the God-head, and theſe three are One God, the ſame in eſſence, equal in power and glory.

Concerning the decrees and providences of God.

Art. 1. The decrees of God are his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his own will, whereby for his own glory he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.

Art. 2. All events that ever have, or ever will take place, are most certainly connected with the decrees of God, or the pleasure of Divine Providence; yet so as not in the least to interfere with the freedom and agency of man, nor destroy the connection between the means and end.

Art. 3. God exeeutes his decrees in the works of creation, providence, and redemption; and every thing which takes place, however dark it may appear to the view of man, it will redound to the glory of God, and the advancement of his cause.

rt. 4. Gods works of providence, are his most , wise, and powerful, preserving and governing is creatures and all their actions.

Concerning the primitive state of man.

rt. 1. Man was at first created in a state of real ness, and conformity to God, being free to stand free to fall.

rt. 2. God entered into a covenant of life with first parents on condition of perfect obedience, iding them to eat of the tree of knowledge, of l and evil upon pain of death.

rt. 3. As it was the constitution of God that ankind should descend from Adam, by ordinary ration, and as he was the covenant head of all uman race, so they were to be in a state of ho- s or sin, as he obeyed or disobeyed, and of equence were to share with him in the blessings ie curse.

Concerning the fall of Man.

rt. 1. Our first pasents being left to the freedom eir own will, fell from that state of holiness in h they were created, by sinning against God.

t. 2. As all mankind are the descendants of a- ate Adam, they are with him the children of h, are morally and totally depraved, have lost munion with God, and being destitute of his l image, are under his wrath and curse, liable l the miseries of this life, to death itself and to ains of hell forever.

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ncerning the Covenant of grace by a Redeemer.

rt. 1. Man by the fall having lost communion God, and having rendered himself incapable e, by the law of works, God revealed and held o him a second covenant, commonly called the

covenant of grace, in which life and salvation are promised to every believer.

Art. 2. The vicatious sufferings of Jesus Christ and his obedience to the divine law, are the only ground of pardon, justification and salvation; yet faith in Christ, as the great atonement and righteousness of the believer, is that which embraces salvation, and without which we cannot partake of the blessings of the covenant of grace.

Art. 3. The blessings of the covenant of grace are freely offered to all who hear the gospel.

Art. 4. The covenant revealed to Adam after the fall, also to Noah, confirmed to Abraham, and continued under the gospel, is the *same covenant of grace*, differing only in the external modes of worship, or the manner of its administration.

Art. 5. The external seals of the covenant of grace, are baptism and the Lord's supper; and the necessary qualifications, for an approved and acceptable attendance on these ordinances, are love to God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Art. 6. But the covenant of grace in such a sense extends to believers, that they, and their infant seed are the proper subjects of baptism. And as the great head of the church declares, that infants of believers, do belong to the kingdom of Heaven, so we believe they are included in his covenant, as belonging to the visible church, and as such the church at large is bound to watch over them, and pray for them, that they may be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; but they are not entitled to the Lord's supper, nor to any sacramental priviledges on their own account, until they shall profess their faith in Christ, and by their own voluntary act, take the covenant on themselves.

Art. 7. The Lord Jesus Christ is the only Redeemer and Mediator between God and man,

phet, Priest and King, Head and Saviour of the
rch.

rt. 8. He is the son of God, the second person
ie holy Trinity, truly, and eternally God, and
y man, one person in two natures distinct.

rt. 9. The voluntary sufferings of Christ, in his
an nature infinitely dignified by its union to the
ne nature, which expressed God's infinite disap-
bation of sin, rendered it consistant for God to
lon the believor.

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cerning the inability of the sinner to comply with the covenant of grace.

rt. 1. Jesus Christ has so prepared the way, for
lon, that life is freely offered to every one who
accept, and God has so clearly revealed those
hs, which are the objects of faith, that the sinner
be under no natural inability to obey the com-
nds of God, or comply with the conditions of sal-
on.

rt. 2. Men have naturally an attachment to self-
and sinful objects, which attachment is wholly
nsistent with their relishing and embracing that
d which is offered them in the gospel, and which
chment also, is the blindness and impotence that
lers the special agency of the spirit absolutely
ssary for their conversion, sanctification and
ation.

Concerning election and effectual calling.

rt. 1. God did from eternity, for the manifesta-
of his own glory, particularly and definitely
ose to everlasting life some angels and some men.

rt. 2. The ground and foundation of God's
ice, or election, was not the foresight of the faith
good works of the elect, nor any moral distinc-
in them from others; but man's compliance

with the conditions of the covenant of grace, is
fruit and not the ground of God's election and cho

Art. 3. Though the reason why God choo
some, while he passes by others is not any mo
difference in them, yet the sovereignty of God is
rected by wise and holy reasons.

Art. 4. Though some men will not comply w
the terms of the gospel, yet the offers of life
made and sincerely made to all, nor does any th
in the scripture militate against the agency, fre
dom and natural ability of the *non elect* to com
with gospel offers and the holy spirit frequen
strives with them, and after communicating mu
intellectual light, leaves them to go on freely in o
position to gospel grace, to their own destruction

Art. 5. All those who are ordained to eternal l
are by the sovereign immediate and all powerfull
gency of the spirit of God, effectually called in ti
to the obedience of faith, to justification and et
nal life. In all such, as to the temper of their hea
there is an instantaneous change, and in consequen
of which the graces of the spirit flow out, in a l
of obedience to God.

Concerning the graces and fruits of the spirit.

Art. 1. True love is a pure and disinterested
fection. It has for its object the interest of bei
in general. It produces complacency in the Divi
character, and obedience to the Divine law.

Art. 2. Repentance unto life is a saving gra
which flows from supreme love to God, in which t
sinner mourns for sin, not so much as it is again
himself, as because it is against God and his rig
eous cause. He does therefore with grief and h
tred of sin turn from it, and cleave unto God throu
Jesus Christ, with full purpose of, and endeavors
ter new obedience.

Art. 3. Justifying faith is a saving grace wroug

soul, by the spirit of God, whereby we receive
t as our prophet, priest and king, trust in him,
ly upon him alone for justification, and accep-
with God.

. 4. Sanctification is a work of God's free
in which the work of renovation is carried
hich is begun in the new birth, whereby be-
s are renewed in the whole man, after the im-
f God, and are enabled more and more to die
in, and live unto God, in righteousness and
oliness.

. 5. Justification is an act of God's free grace,
in he pardons all our sins, and accepts of us
eats us as righteous in his sight, only for the
ousness of Christ.

. 6. The covenant of grace absolutely secures
e believer, strength and perseverance in faith
bedience unto eternal life.

. 7. The scripture evidences and marks of a
change and interest in Christ and the kings
of Heaven, are the graces and fruits of the

Concerning good works.

. 1. Good works are those which are performs
obedience to God's commands, and with a
to his glory, and though they do not profit
nor lay him under any obligation to us; yet
re pleasing in the sight of God, and highly
able to ourselves and our fellow men.

. 2. No works can truly be denominated good
ch as proceed from holy affections, and are
uit of faith, neither can any other be well
ng and acceptable in the sight of God: For
requires, that we should pray in faith, that we
l enter into covenant in faith, give up our chil-
n faith, give alms in faith, and in faith perform
act of obedience, duty and religious worship.

Art. 3. Though our good works do not pr God, nor merit any thing at his hands, yet God not suffer them to pass unnoticed nor unreward but the reward will be a reward of grace, and no debt.

Concerning a future state and day of Judgment

Art. 1. The Lord Jesus Christ is the fut judge of quick and dead.

Art. 2. In the end of the world, when Christ sh have accomplished the great designs of his kingd on the earth, all intelligences shall be arraigned fore him, and shall receive a reward according their works, whether they have been good, or whe er they have been evil. Then shall he receive righteous to the joys and honors of his kingdom a doom the wicked to eternal perdition.

Concerning a church and the qualification of its me bers.

Art 1. The invisible Catholic church includes those, who, by a sincere faith have complied w the conditions and are interested in the blessings the covenant of grace, whether in glory or here i militant state.

Art. 2. The visible church includes such ad persons (and their infant seed) as have profess their faith in Christ entered into covenant with G and each other, to walk in the statutes and ordin ces of the gospel, and have received baptism.

Art. 3. The catholic visible church is divided i particular christian societies, which in the Ne Testament are called churches.

Art. 4. The officers of the church are of t kinds,

1. Pastors, who in the New-Testament are c ed Bishops, Elders, Ministers, &c, whose duty i to preside in all church assemblies, or meetings,

ach the word, administer the seals of the cove-
it, and ordain others, who give evidence of their
ng called of God to the work of the ministry.
2. Deacons, whose duty it is to take care of the
nporalities of the church, visit the sick, lead in
igious meetings where a pastor cannot be present,
l in fine to assist the pastor and relieve him as
ch as possible from all those burdens and duties,
ich do not necessarily make a part of the pas-
's official duty.

Art. 5. Every church is to judge of the qualifica-
ns of its own members, and is to exercise the dis-
line prescribed in the gospel, even to excommu-
ation: But as difficult questions, according to the
w-Testament, were decided by councils, we
ge it expedient that any aggrieved party shall
e a right to appeal from the decision of a church,
a council of ministers and delegates from neigh-
ing churches, mutually chosen, which on an ap-
l to the association shall be final.

Art. 6. As there ought to be visible fellowship a-
ng churches, which cannot be, except they are
ted in the essential doctrines of faith and prac-
e, so they ought to watch over, and admonish
h other for error, unchristian neglect or disor-
ly walk, and even to reject or excommunicate,
ere there is no reformation: But one particular
rch shall not withdraw fellowship from another,
inflict any public censure on another. This
ll be the business of the association, and when
association, in a legal meeting, shall declare any
ticular church unsuitable for church fellowship,
the other churches of this association, shall treat
d church, as an excommunicated church.

CONFESSION OF FAITH AND FORM OF COVENANT, ADOPTED BY THE BLACK-RIVER ASSOCIATION,

CONFESSION OF FAITH.

You (and each of you) being ſenſible that public profeſſion of religion, is God's holy quirement and your reaſonable duty, do ow draw near to exhibit the articles of our faith in Chriſt, and to aſſent to the ſolmn covenant of the great and holy God.

Art. 1. You believe in one only, the living and true God, Creator and governor of [illegible] unchangeable in his nature, existing in three perſons in one Godhead, the Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt; and that ch perſon in the Godhead, is equally and ernally poſſeſſed of all perfections and orthy of ſupreme adoration and obedience.

2. You believe the ſcriptures of the old d new Teſtaments to be the word of God, ntaining all things neceſſary for us to beve and practice.

3. You believe that God at firſt made an upright after his own image, and placed him under a covenant of works; that loſt his innocence, and by his ſin involved himſelf and his offspring in guilt and iſery.

4. You believe that in conſequence of the oſtacy, all mankind are born in a ſtate of al moral depravity, being dead in treſpaſ-

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ſes and ſins, from which they are incapab
of recovering themſelves ; that ſalvation
by Chriſt Jeſus alone ; that the obedien
and ſufferings of Chriſt are the ſole merito
rious cauſe of the ſinner's juſtification be
fore God ; that in order to obtain juſtifica
tion before God, the ſinner muſt believe i
Chriſt, and repent of all his ſins.

5. You believe the moral law to be th
rule of obedience to all men ; that the viola
tion of that law deſerves eternal death.

6. You believe in Chriſt as the only me
diator between God and man, and the Re
deemer of God's elect ; that to accompliſh
his work of redemption, Chriſt became ma
by being conceived of the Holy Ghoſt, an
born of the virgin Mary ; and that his di
vine and human natures being united in on
perſon and two diſtinct natures, he was ver
God and very man.

7. You believe in Chriſt's death as an a
tonement neceſſary for the ſalvation of ſin
ners ; that on the third day he aroſe again
from the dead ; that he hath aſcended into
Heaven ; that he now intercedes with the
Father for ſinners, and hath ſent down his
holy ſpirit into this fallen world, to con
vince of ſin, to renew and ſanctify the heart
of men.

8. You believe in the doctrine of elec-

on, that God did in his eternal covenant
f Redemption, give his Son jesus Christ, a
umber of the human family as a seed to
erve him, being chosen by his sovereign
race unto salvation, through sanctification
f the Spirit, and belief of the truth.

9. You believe in the effectual calling
f the spirit, the new birth and the necessity
f the spirit's influences to excite and enable
nen to the performance of any gracious
cts; their adoption into God's family,
neir indissoluble union to Christ, and their
erseverance in grace and holiness unto the
nd.

10. You believe that all under the gospel
e invited to come unto jesus Christ and
ccept of salvation freely, and that nothing
ill prevent their acceptance of the glori-
us offer, but the wicked opposition of
heir own hearts.

11. You believe in the institution of pub-
c worship, in family prayer every morn-
g and evening, in the morality of the chris-
an Sabbath, and the ordinances of baptism
d the Lord's supper.

12. You believe in the immortality of the
ul, the death and resurrection of the body
d final judgment, the eternal happiness of
true believers and friends of Christ, and
e eternal misery of the unbelieving and

disobedient, agreeable to the words of our blessed Saviour and judge of quick and dead, "and these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."

To these articles you give your full assent.

COVENANT.

You, looking upon yourself (or yourselves) under obligation to confess God before men, and to unite yourself (or yourselves) to his visible church on earth, do now, sincerely and solemnly acknowledge your obligations to be the Lord's, and do so far as you know your own heart, cheerfully devote yourself (or yourselves) to God, through Jesus Christ. You renounce all your ways of sin, and give yourself (or yourselves) up to God, choosing him for your lawgiver and portion; and sensible of your blindness, guilt and infinite unworthiness and corruption, you chose Christ for your teacher, and rely on his merit and righteousness alone for pardon and acceptance with God, and receive the Holy Ghost as your sanctifier; heartily embracing the way of salvation revealed in the gospel. You take God's word to be your only rule of faith and practice, and solemnly engage by the

elp of his grace, sincerely to conform to it
all your ways of holy living; and you
romise and engage to maintain and constant-
to attend upon all the institutions and or-
nances of the gospel. You who are heads
families, (and you who are not, whenever
ou enter this station) promise to read daily
portion of scripture in your families, and
nstantly to pray with them every morning
d evening, so long as you have strength
d opportunity; that you will never al-
w of any dancing, gaming, carousing, as
cessive drinking, nor any other loose or
cious practices whatever, in any house of
hich you have the proper command; that
u will faithfully use your influence to re-
ain your children and all under your spe-
al care, from balls, from all loose and bad
mpany, and from every wicked course;
at you will give up your infant seed to
od in baptism, and endeavor, to the best of
ur understanding, to instruct them in all
e important things of religion, and train
em up in the fear, nurture and admonition
the Lord. And you do now publicly
ouse the cause of Christ, promising to be
thful in the same and to endeavor to pro-
ote it in all proper ways, especially seeking
recommend your holy religion to all, by
ur strict and constant practice of justice,

goodneſs, temperance, ſobriety and Godlineſs. All this you do in humble dependence on Jeſus Chriſt, praying that he would enable you to be faithful in his covenant, ſtrengthening you unto every good work, to do his will, working in you that which is well pleaſing to Him, to whom be glory forever and ever, AMEN.

Thus you covenant.

Aſſent being given, the miniſter ſhall ſay,

As an officer in the church of Chriſt, I declare you to be a viſible member (or members) of Chriſt's viſible kingdom on the earth, and of this particular communion, with a full right to enjoy the privileges of the ſame; and accordingly doth this church (here the whole church will riſe) receive and acknowledge you a member (or members) of this communion, and engage to watch over you in love, and walk with you as fellow travellers to the Heavenly Canaan, earneſtly beſeeching Almighty God, for Chriſt's ſake, to make all grace abound towards you, unto whom we do now appeal for the ſincerity of our hearts, and to whom be glory, dominion and praiſe in the church, both now and ever, world without end, AMEN.

The foregoing Articles of Faith and Covenant, were cheerfully and unanimously adopted by the Church of Chriſt in Lorrain. Atteſt,

ENOS BLISS.

September 21, 1809.

The foregoing profeſſion of Faith and Covenant, were cheerfully and unanimously adopted by the Church of Chriſt in Adams.

Atteſt,

DAVID SPEAR.

October 26, 1809.

There are eighteen male members in the Church at Adams.

The foregoing profeſſion of Faith and articles of Covenant, were readily and unanimously adopted by the congregational Church of Chriſt, in Rodman. Atteſt,

by the united congregational Church i
Adams and Hounsfield. Atteſt,

DAVID SPEAR.

November 15, 1809.

Male members five.

The foregoing Articles of Faith an
Covenant, adopted by the Church in Wate
town. Atteſt,

WM. FELLOWS.

November 17, 1809.

Ten male members.

Adopted by the Church in Turin.

JAMES MURDOCK, *Moderator.*

February 17, 1810.

Twelve male members.

Adopted by the Church in Eaſt Lyde

Atteſt,

oted by the Church in Lowville.

Atteſt,

ISAAC CLINTON.

ly 15, 1810.

wenty male members.

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